

## Contributions.

### SALVATION—NO. 7.—BAPTISM.

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We have dwelt briefly already upon a number of subjects that stand in connection with God's plan of salvation. Upon some of these different views obtain in the Christian world when they come to reduce them to practice. We now approach a subject that has in all probability elicited and stirred up more discussion than any other subject connected with the plan of salvation. As we proceed with this theme we shall lay down a few rules for our government, in interpreting God's word.

1. Take all Scripture, (Old and New Testaments) in a plain, literal common sense way as we would any other book, or newspaper unless there is a good logical reason for departing from the literal sense of the language.

2. Always keep the end in view, for Christ has said, "*the things concerning me have an end.*"

3. Always bearing in mind the fact that the Old and New Testaments are the transcript of God's will to man.

4. That whatever God enjoins in his word on his people, they are in duty bound to perform.

5. That men have not the privilege, to *alter or change*, in any sense or respect his word.

We now reproduce the last, the great commission that our Savior gave to his sorrowing disciples on the mountain in Galilee. Oh! what a scene, some sad on account of the approaching separation, others worshiping, the Savior uttering his voice; while angels, doubtless, were bending over the battlements of heaven, ready waiting to receive the exile home—The commission.—"All power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and teach (make disciples) all nations baptizing (immersing) them in (*eis into*) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (age.) Matt. 28: 18-20. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16: 15, 16. We take more pains with the commission as rendered by Matthew, because it is explanatory within itself, as well as definite. It embraces two primary departments. 1. The Missionary. 2. The pastoral. With these departments, two very comprehensive encouragements are connected. The first to undertake the

work. The second to go through with it.

1. Missionary Department. "Go and make disciples of all nations." Mark, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every (rational or human) creature." These set forth the sphere, and universality of the mission to which they are now called by their risen Lord. Carry the glad tidings into all lands, where nations dwell, proclaim it loud and long so that every ear may hear its joyful sound, and think not your work is done until all the nations have embraced it, and enrolled themselves as *my disciples*. This being accomplished, the missionary now merges into the pastoral.

2. Primary Department. Now "teach them,"—these baptized believers that have become members of the visible church to observe (to do) *all things* whatsoever I have commanded you. That is during the time I have been with you. The first words of encouragement to undertake and begin this great and noble work we have in the words, "All power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth." The same as to say, you have been timid, you feared the people, the officers, but now cast aside your timidity, banish all your fears, step upon the great platform that embraces the plan of salvation knowing that you do so under a banner that has back of it all the power and authority in heaven and earth. Heaven's love, wisdom and strength. Power over persons, passions, principles—power to subdue and evangelize the world, I now place this with you in my word.

The second encouragement is contained in the words, "And lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This is to cause them and their successors to continue to labor faithfully until the great work is done, and the world conquered for Christ. We have noted in former communications, that believing is a condition in the plan of salvation; also repentance as following second in the gospel order, but faith is not a condition. We now come to look at baptism as the last one in the sacred trio. We have already observed that to believe, is to do something that involves an act and requires an effort. So also is it to repent, to do something. Coming to baptize, we have a word that belongs to the same class of words that are used to set before us the preceding conditions, and means to do a certain something by the administration. That is the administrator is to baptize and the convert is to be passive.

We now will try to find out what the administrator does when he baptizes. We now assume that the word *baptize* tells the administrator what he is to do and how he is to do it. Words may and do have dif-

ferent meanings, but we must not forget the fact that a word can have but one meaning when applied to one thing. So in the word *baptize*, it may have a dozen different meanings when applied to so many different things. The word baptize as applied to the rite that an administrator is to perform with the passive subject as one of the conditions of salvation, can have but *one meaning*. We must remember that words change their meaning by usage and consent, but truth does not so change. Hence we cannot, dare not, accept any of the meanings that have been attached to this word since the Lord Jesus Christ gave the commission to his disciples. What it meant then, it now must mean. It tells the administrator precisely to do the same thing now, that it told the administrator to do eighteen hundred years ago. We will now cite some authorities upon the original meaning of the word.

Donegan, in his Greek lexicon says: Baptizo is to immerse repeatedly into a liquid, to submerge, to sink; also to plunge, also to cleanse, to wash."

Stephanus: "To dip, immerse, as we immerse things for the purpose of coloring or washing, to submerge, merge, to cover with water—to cleanse, to wash. The following is copied from R. Pengilly's "Scripture Guide to Baptism." Inquiry—as to the manner by which the ordinance was administered. Observe, first, the meaning of the word baptize. The plain import of the word, my reader is particularly requested to examine, and to remember whenever we meet with it. \* \* \* It is the word used by the Holy Spirit to express this ordinance, and adopted by our translators, from the original Greek, but not translated. If it were translated into English, what is the meaning of it? This is a question of great importance to our present inquiry. We will therefore hear what answer the most learned Pedo-baptists divines will give this question. Witsius, (Professor of Divinity in the Universities of Erancker Utrecht, and Layden.) "It cannot be denied, but the native signification of the words *Baptein* and *Baptizein*, is to plunge or dip."—Zanchius, (Professor of Divinity at Hildesburg.) "The proper signification of Baptizo is to immerse, plunge under, to overwhelm in water." Mr. DoCourcy tells us the opinion of Zanchius is worth a *thousand* others."

Calvin: "The word baptize signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church."

Beza: "Christ commanded us to be baptized; by which word it is certain immersion is signified."

Vitringa: "The act of baptizing is the